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EIC 3600

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To: Bret Hayes  
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Art Unit : 3618  
Wednesday, July 20, 2005  
  
Case Serial Number: 10/945524

From: Etelka R. Griffin  
Location: EIC 3600  
KNOX/4B68  
Phone:571-272-4230  
  
[Etelka.griffin@uspto.gov](mailto:Etelka.griffin@uspto.gov)

## Search Notes:

Litigation

Source: [Legal > Area of Law - By Topic > Patent Law > Patents > U.S. Patents > Utility, Design and Plant Patents](#)   
Terms: [patno=6460483](#) ([Edit Search](#))

874491 (09) 6460483 October 8, 2002

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE GRANTED PATENT

**6460483**

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October 8, 2002

Continuous flow watering device for pets

**APPL-NO:** 874491 (09)

**FILED-DATE:** June 5, 2001

**GRANTED-DATE:** October 8, 2002

**CORE TERMS:** container, reservoir, pump, ramp, pet, storage, processing, watering, ledge, rear ...

**ENGLISH-ABST:**

A continuous watering device for small pets which produces minimal noise and splashing, the watering device having a lower container for holding water, a submersible pump to pump water to an elevated height, a upper reservoir to clean the water as it enters the reservoir, and a smooth and curved ramp to support water as it slides downward and into the lower container. The continuous watering device uses flowing water to attract small pets and to provide clean water by continuously circulating the water thereby reducing the growth rate of bacteria and fungus.

**SUMMARY:**

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates to pet watering devices, more particularly to a continuous waterer device for pets whereby water is circulated to provide continuous running water for animals.

2. Description of Related Art

Animal watering devices that create flowing water to attract small pets is well known in the art; however, these devices create unwanted noises and splashing, a nuisance to pet owners. These unwanted noises often frighten pets which makes them reluctant to approach such

'devices.

In addition, prior art watering devices do not provide an automatic, simple and spill free method to replenish the water supply lost from evaporation or use. Re-filling these watering devices are performed by carrying the device to a water source, or by emptying water into the device from a second receptacle, such as a cup or jar. This creates an inconvenience for pet owners and requires frequent monitoring of the water level because there is no means to automatically re-fill the device to maintain a minimum water level. While some devices disclose a secondary reservoir to continuously replenish the water supply, spilling will inevitably occur when replacing the secondary reservoirs because the bottles must be inverted in order to be attached to the waterer device.

#### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The continuous waterer device disclosed herein has a unique structure and operation that causes the operation of the device to produce minimal noise and minimal splashing. The waterer preferably comprises a lower container to hold water so that the pet may drink therefrom. A submersible pump is located in the lower container to circulate water from the lower container to an upper reservoir where the water can be filtered. The pump is positioned in the lower container so that the suction ports are fully submerged in order to reduce the noise associated with the operation of the pump. The filter removes debris such as cat hair, dirt, etc. that may collect in the water. The water exits the upper reservoir onto a ledge that directs the flow of water onto a continuous and curved ramp. The ledge is shaped to produce silent and laminar flow down the center of the continuous ramp until the water reaches the lower container.

According to another embodiment of the invention, a removable and portable storage reservoir is optionally provided to continuously replenish and maintain a minimum water level in the lower container when water loss occurs from evaporation or use. The storage reservoir comprises a valve that is automatically opened when placed on the continuous waterer such that water can be gravity fed into the lower container when the water falls below a predetermined level. After the storage reservoir is emptied, it is removed from the waterer apparatus and carried to a water source for re-filling. When filled with water, water cannot leak from the reservoir as the valve is closed due to the weight of the water pushing down on the valve. The reservoir can then be transported from the re-fill source back to the watering device with no spilling. The storage reservoir is preferably translucent or clear to allow users to observe the water level without disassembling the apparatus.

In another aspect of the present invention, the device is configured to provide substantially silent operation by insuring that the submersible pump of the device remains submerged as the animal drinks water. The rate of flow from the portable storage reservoir into the lower container is such that the water level in the lower container will be maintained above the level of the suction port of the submersible pump as the water from the portable storage reservoir gravity feeds into the lower container. This feature maintains silent operation of the pumping apparatus regardless of whether or not water is delivered to the lower container in a non-splashing manner.

In an alternate embodiment, water is stored in a lower container and pumped via a submersible pump directly to the ledge via a lift tube. Water is dispersed from the lift tube onto the ledge where the water is directed onto the curved ramp for flow back into the lower container.

This apparatus provides numerous advantages for both the pets and their owners. The continuous flow of water provides a sanitary drinking environment for the pet as the water circulation reduces the bacteria development in the container. Furthermore, it provides nutritional aspects by helping to reduce the risk of urinary tract infections, which often occur in pets as a result of insufficient water intake. It has been observed that small animals,

especially cats, are attracted to running water; thus, by providing a water bowl having running water, the attraction will cause pets to drink with greater frequency. Thus, the increased water intake will reduce the risk of urinary tract infections. In addition, because pets are attracted to the flow of water, they are less likely to drink from sinks, toilets, tubs, etc.

Source: [Legal > Area of Law - By Topic > Patent Law > Patents > U.S. Patents > Utility, Design and Plant Patents](#)

Terms: **patno=6460483** ([Edit Search](#))

View: [Custom](#)

Segments: Abst, Appl-no, Summary

Date/Time: Wednesday, July 20, 2005 - 10:35 AM EDT

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1 / 1 PLUSPAT - @QUESTEL-ORBIT - image

**Patent Number :**  
US6460483 B1 20021008 [US6460483]

**Title :**  
(B1) Continuous flow watering device for pets

**Patent Assignee :**  
(B1) DOSKOCIL MFG COMPANY INC (US)

**Patent Assignee :**  
Doskocil Manufacturing Company, Inc., Arlington TX [US]

**Inventor(s) :**  
(B1) NORTHRUP MELANEY (US); SKURDALSVOLD SCOTT A (US)

**Application Nbr :**  
US87449101 20010605 [2001US-0874491]

**Priority Details :**  
US87449101 20010605 [2001US-0874491]

**Intl Patent Class :**  
(B1) A01K-007/02

**EPO ECLA Class :**  
A01K-007/00

**US Patent Class :**  
ORIGINAL (O) : 119074000; CROSS-REFERENCE (X) : 119072000 119702000

**Document Type :**  
Basic

**Citations :**  
US3720184; US3901439; US4721063; US4747538; US4836142; US4976220;  
US5167368; US5259336; US5326032; US5501178; US5743210; US5799609;  
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US6142099

**Publication Stage :**  
(B1) U.S. Patent (no pre-grant pub.) after Jan. 2, 2001

**Abstract :**  
A continuous watering device for small pets which produces minimal noise and splashing, the watering device having a lower container for holding water, a submersible pump to pump water to an elevated height, a upper reservoir to clean the water as it enters the reservoir, and a smooth and curved ramp to support water as it slides downward and into the lower container. The continuous watering device uses flowing water to attract small pets and to provide clean water by continuously circulating the water thereby reducing the growth rate of bacteria and fungus.

**Update Code :**  
2002-42

1 / 1 LGST - @EPO

**Patent Number :**  
US6460483 B1 20021008 [US6460483]

**Application Number :**  
US87449101 20010605 [2001US-0874491]

**Action Taken :**  
20010605 US/AS-A  
ASSIGNMENT  
OWNER: DOSKOCIL MANUFACTURING, INC. 4209 BARNETT ARLINGTO; EFFECTIVE  
DATE: 20010604  
ASSIGNMENT OF ASSIGNORS INTEREST;ASSIGNORS:NORTHROP,

MELANEY; SKURDALSVOLD, SCOTT A.; REEL/FRAME: 011881/0924

20020620 US/AS-A

ASSIGNMENT

OWNER: BANK OF AMERICA, N.A. 901 MAIN STREET, 66TH FLOOR; EFFECTIVE DATE: 20011221  
SECURITY AGREEMENT; ASSIGNOR: DOCKOCIL MANUFACTURING COMPANY, INC.; REEL/FRAME: 012983/0099

20040102 US/AS-A

OWNER: FLEET CAPITAL CORPORATION, AS AGENT 15260 VENTURA; EFFECTIVE DATE: 20031230  
SECURITY AGREEMENT; ASSIGNOR: DOSKOCIL MANUFACTURING COMPANY, INC. /AR; REEL/FRAME: 014815/0861

20041130 US/RF-A  
REISSUE APPLICATION FILED  
EFFECTIVE DATE: 20040921

Update Code :

2005-18

1 / 1 CRXX - @CLAIMS/RRX

Patent Number :

6,460,483 A 20021008 [US6460483]

Patent Assignee :

Doskocil Mfg Co Inc

Actions :

20040102 REASSIGNED  
SECURITY AGREEMENT

Assignor: DOSKOCIL MANUFACTURING COMPANY, INC., DATE SIGNED: 12/30/2003

Assignee: FLEET CAPITAL CORPORATION, AS AGENT, 15260 VENTURA BLVD., SUITE 400, DOSKOCIL ACCOUNT OFFICER, SHERMAN OAKS, CALIFORNIA, 91403

Reel 014815/Frame 0861

Contact: FEDERAL RESEARCH CO., LLC, JULIE CRAVITZ, 1030 15TH ST., NW, SUITE 920, WASHINGTON, DC 20005

20040921 REISSUE REQUESTED

ISSUE DATE OF O.G.: 20041130

REISSUE REQUEST NUMBER: 10/945524

EXAMINATION GROUP RESPONSIBLE FOR REISSUEPROCESS: 3644

Reissue Patent Number:

1 / 1 INPADOC - @INPADOC  
**Patent Number :**  
US 6460483 BA 20021008 [US6460483]  
**Title :**  
CONTINUOUS FLOW WATERING DEVICE FOR PETS  
**Inventor(s) :**  
NORTHROP MELANEY [US]; SKURDALSVOLD SCOTT A [US]  
**Patent Assignee (Words) :**  
DOSKOCIL MFG COMPANY INC [US]  
**Application Details :**  
US 874491/01-A 20010605 [2001US-0874491]  
**Priority Details :**  
US 874491/01-A 20010605 [2001US-0874491]  
**Intl. Patent Class. :**  
A01K-007/02

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**Patent Number :**  
US6460483 B1 20021008 [US6460483]  
**Application Number :**  
US87449101 20010605 [2001US-0874491]  
**Action Taken :**  
20010605 US/AS-A  
ASSIGNMENT  
OWNER: DOSKOCIL MANUFACTURING, INC. 4209 BARNETT ARLINGTO; EFFECTIVE  
DATE: 20010604  
ASSIGNMENT OF ASSIGNORS INTEREST;ASSIGNORS:NORTHROP,  
MELANEY;SKURDALSVOLD, SCOTT A.;REEL/FRAME:011881/0924  
  
20020620 US/AS-A  
ASSIGNMENT  
OWNER: BANK OF AMERICA, N.A. 901 MAIN STREET, 66TH FLOOR; EFFECTIVE  
DATE: 20011221  
SECURITY AGREEMENT;ASSIGNOR:DOCKOCIL MANUFACTURING COMPANY,  
INC.;REEL/FRAME:012983/0099  
  
20040102 US/AS-A  
  
OWNER: FLEET CAPITAL CORPORATION, AS AGENT 15260 VENTURA; EFFECTIVE  
DATE: 20031230  
SECURITY AGREEMENT;ASSIGNOR:DOSKOCIL MANUFACTURING COMPANY, INC.  
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20041130 US/RF-A  
REISSUE APPLICATION FILED  
EFFECTIVE DATE: 20040921  
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2005-18

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